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SUBJECT: IVLP Alumni Conduct Panel Discussion on Tanzanian Political Youth Leadership

¶1. Summary: Over fifty young political leaders and members of the media community visited the U.S. Mission April 15 to participate in a panel discussion led by three young Tanzanian political leaders, who are also IVLP alumni. The capacity crowd, hailing from youth wings of several political parties, civil society and media, listened to the alumni discuss their U.S. exchange experiences in 2008 and 2009. The program generated a lively question and answer session resulting in positive print and television coverage. End

Summary.

¶2. Three IVLP alumni, including: Zitto Kabwe, Member of Parliament, Kigoma North from opposition CHADEMA party, who attended the "Leadership Development for Young Political Leaders" IVLP from April 24-May 15, 2008; Ayoub Bakari, Commissioner of Zanzibar Electoral Commission representing the Civic United Front (CUF) Party who participated in "I-Vote: International Visitors Observing the Election" IVLP from October 25-November 8; and Beno Malisa, Vice Chairman of Youth Wing of the Ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) Party, who attended the "Youth Leadership and Civic Participation" IVLP from March 19-April 9, participated in a well-attended roundtable conducted at the U.S. Mission April 15.

¶3. The Public Affairs Officer welcomed the large audience with a short history of the International Visitor Leadership Program, its impact, and information about other PAS exchange programs. Zitto Kabwe, one of Tanzania's most outspoken and popular Member of Parliament (from the opposition), shared his experience in the U.S., which occurred during the height of the Democratic primaries. Kabwe was especially impressed with the role played by policy organizations and think tanks in the U.S., which he saw focus both voters and politicians on issues, and involve academicians and businesspeople into politics. He remarked that Tanzanians must follow suit to "support principles, and not individuals."

¶4. Ayoub Bakari, opposition CUF party member of the Zanzibar Electoral Commission (ZEC), then spoke at length of what he saw and learned in the U.S. during the November election, focusing on U.S. electoral processes, and the results' impact on U.S. foreign policy.

He gave a brief but accurate synopsis of the U.S. electoral process, stressing that despite different electoral laws in every state and county, "it works!" Bakari spoke with awe about the grassroots power of individuals in the U.S., and was amazed that the U.S. President "cannot do anything without the support of Congress."

Bakari remarked how Americans made efforts to know their country and their rights. He was proud that he had a chance to see the historical U.S. presidential elections, and he kept the audience in rapt attention with his remarks. Based on what he learned, Bakari suggested the Tanzanian government could be more effective if Ministers were not also Members of Parliament. Understanding this difference for the first time in the U.S., he is now a proponent of separating legislative and executive powers in Tanzania, as a way to provide additional power to Members of Parliament and create a more accountable government. Bakari remarked that the current system in Tanzania, with the President appointing Ministers from amongst MPs, brings about conflicts of interest.

¶5. Beno Malisa, just days following his return from the IVLP,

lauded the fact that youth participation in U.S. politics may start as early as 13, while in Tanzania youth become involved in politics much later. He was impressed by Americans' patriotism and national pride, and praised youth extracurricular activities and compulsory community service in the U.S. He said outreach programs and sports privileges being given to those who perform well in schools was a strong shift from what he expected to find. He called for more national service opportunities for Tanzanians, but took the chance to offer them to those members of the ruling party's youth wing.

¶6. The audience posed a number of questions on how to shape Tanzanian youth into responsible citizens. Panelists repeated that youth should become involved in politics in early age, and they should unite in service despite whatever their political beliefs. Youth organization leaders espoused youth supporting principals instead of blindly following individuals or parties.

¶7. The panel discussion was supported by the following IIP and other publications:

- E-Journal: U.S. Presidential Transitions.
- Democracy Is A Discussion: The Challenges and Promise of a New Democratic Era, a Handbook.
- What is a Democracy, IIP
- 2009 Voice of America (VOA) calendars

¶8. Media coverage/results: Excerpts from the discussion aired on the "Channel Ten" evening news, and appeared in the following English and Swahili newspapers:

- This Day, circulation 10,000
- The African (April 16 and 17), circulation 5,000
- Mtanzania Daima (article with photo), circulation 18,000

¶9. Comment: The panel-led discussion brought together three prominent youth leaders from separate political parties for a

cordial and fruitful discussion in front of primarily consisting of political parties' youth wings and civil society leaders. The fact that we have sent these particular up and coming Tanzanian leaders on the IVLP is a testament to the inter-agency panel's collaborative efforts in selecting Tanzania's future leadership to experience this type of cultural exchange with the United States. The audience was grateful to Mission personnel for the opportunity to discuss the challenges Tanzanian youth encounter and resolving to seek out solutions to address them. We will continue to use the example of the U.S. 2008 elections as a springboard for discussion to reach out to Tanzanian youth as this country prepares for its own national elections in 2010. End comment.